

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1 to 19. (Canceled).

20. (Previously Presented) A method for determining an operating state on triggering a fan motor, comprising:

operating the fan motor via a switching device;

triggering the switching device via a pulse-width-modulated triggering signal, a pulse duty factor of the triggering signal predefining a triggering state of the fan motor;

measuring as a measured variable one of a voltage potential at a node between the fan motor and the switching device and a motor current;

determining an operating state on triggering the fan motor as a function of the measured variable and the pulse duty factor;

recognizing an open load fault if the voltage potential essentially corresponds to a supply voltage potential of the fan motor applied to the switching device; and

upon recognition of an open load fault, switching the switching device through for a specific period of time, in order to apply a maximum voltage to the fan motor, so that merely oxidized connection points are cleaned.

21. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 20, further comprising:

smoothing the measured variable by low-pass filtering the measured variable.

Claims 22 to 25. (Canceled).

26. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in Claim ~~39~~ 20, further comprising:

recognizing an overvoltage fault if a measured voltage potential is above the defined voltage range.

27. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 20, further comprising: recognizing one of a blocking and a sluggishness of the fan motor if the motor current is outside a defined current range.

28. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 27, further comprising:

determining the defined current range by a measurement at a defined applied supply voltage at different pulse duty factors.

Claims 29 to 39. (Canceled).